

NEW YOUTH WEBSITE AIMED AT YOUTH SHOWCASES GAUTRAIN SKILLS

The Gautrain Project has launched a new funky yet educational website to introduce pre-grade nine learners to various careers and skills required to successfully complete a big infrastructure project like Gautrain. Skills development in the math, science, technology and engineering sectors are one of the Project's objectives – *MyTrain* takes Gautrain a step closer to that objective as it creates awareness, appetite and a better understanding of these much needed skills.

This website is the third website under the Gautrain domain. The other two being the main Gautrain website and the award winning website for kids.

Located at www.mytrain.co.za <<http://www.mytrain.co.za>> or as a link from www.gautrain.co.za, the site targets learners at a stage when they need to consider the most appropriate school subjects for their chosen careers.

In celebration of Public Transport Month, the MyTrain website was launched by Gauteng MEC for Public Transport, Roads and Works, Mr Ignatius Jacobs. on 23 October at Kingsmead College.

“The MyTrain.co.za website aims to cultivate a culture of learning, especially in scarce skills like maths, science and engineering. Gautrain is a real-life, practical example of how a variety of careers come together to build the biggest and first ever rapid rail link project in Africa,” said MEC Jacobs.

Tech-savvy teenagers are the future riders of Gautrain. During research conducted amongst a representative group, it was evident that they are very interested in a website that explains the world-class technology used to build Gautrain. However, they require websites to present information in bite-size text and images that are quick to download.

Besides showcasing on Gautrain's technology and skills, the MyTrain website also encourages teenagers to make use of public transport. It educates teenagers about the various initiatives to improve public transport by 2010 and how Gautrain will be integrated with other modes of transport such as busses, trains, plains, taxi's and trains.

Another important aspect featured on the MyTrain website is Gautrain's adherence to its Environmental Management Plan which has several measures in place to protect communities during the construction of Gautrain. It includes issues such as noise and dust monitoring, pollution and heritage protection.

Concerned about global warming and other environmental issues, teenagers are also educated about the benefits of Gautrain in terms of eliminating carbon dioxide emissions and combating urban sprawl through its positive impact on Gauteng's spatial development framework.

During the launch of the MyTrain website, Kingsmead College learners also accompanied MEC Jacobs to the Rosebank Station Construction site to view construction progress first hand. The school is situated next to the Gautrain Rosebank Station construction site.

Lisa Benning, Headmistress Kingsmead College said: “Kingsmead College has seen the construction of the Gautrain as a valuable educational opportunity for all our girls. Regular meetings are held between Bombela and Kingsmead College where the level of co-operation is high. We view the Gautrain in a most positive light. It is our hope that more, much-needed, architects and engineers will emerge from the pupils at Kingsmead College who are fortunate to be witnessing history in the making.”

“An important legacy of the Gautrain is the skills and technology transfer that it will bring to our people. The next time we have to construct a system like the Gautrain or when we decide to extend the Gautrain service, the South African youth of today will make it happen. But only if they qualify in the professions that is needed on the delivery of huge infrastructure projects such as the Gautrain.” concluded Jacobs.

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